

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Barbara Lynch
FEMA, External Affairs
212.680.8516

Maureen Wren
NYS DEC Press Office
518.402.8000

NEW FLOOD MAPS DISPLAYED AT OPEN HOUSE
State, FEMA Officials To Answer Questions; Offer Advice on Insurance

NEW YORK –Nov. 24 – Tioga County residents are invited to review the county's new, preliminary flood map at an "Open Houses" on December 8th at the county office building between 4pm and 8pm.

The meeting is being hosted by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which developed the new maps to provide residents with a realistic assessment for their risk for flooding. No public presentation is planned, but floodplain managers and flood insurance experts will be on hand to answer questions about the map and its' effect on specific properties. Inclusion in an official flood plain carries a **mandatory** requirement for flood insurance if the structure has a federally-back mortgage, or a mortgage with a federally regulated lender.

New flood maps are the result of Map Modernization, a five-year, \$1 billion program to provide updated, digitized flood maps for 92% of the nation's population.

The "Open House" on December 8th will take place in the Hubbard Auditorium in the Tioga County Office Building, 56 Main Street, Owego. Residents can stop by anytime between 4pm and 8pm to learn how the new, preliminary flood map may affect them. Questions about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), insurance premiums and information on how to challenge inclusion in the Special Flood Hazard Area will likewise be addressed.

While most locations in Tioga County do not have significant changes, the village of Nichols is protected by a levee system that may not meet mapping standards, according to Mary Colvin, Acting Director of the Mitigation Division at FEMA, Region II, which includes New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. "The fact that the Nichols levee may not provide adequate protection means an increase in the number of flood-prone properties there. We particularly encourage Nichols residents to attend the Open House on December 8th, to learn their new flood plain status and ways in which they can save money on flood insurance."

(more)

Tioga County residents can check their flood plain status on the new, preliminary flood map at their municipal offices, or online. The FEMA website for the new maps is <http://www.rampp-team.com/ny.htm>. The maps are listed alphabetically by county.

“The first step in protecting yourself and your family against the dangers of flooding is to know which zone you’re in on the new, preliminary maps,” said William Nechamen, National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator of the NYS DEC. “Once you know your risks, you can take steps to minimize those risks.”

“The single biggest mitigation option is flood insurance,” said Ms. Colvin. “If you’re currently out of the flood zone, but are going into it under the new maps, you should buy it now. That way, your current, less risky flood zone designation can be ‘grandfathered’ in, enabling to get the same coverage and protection at a lower rate.”

Background on Map Modernization, the National Flood Insurance Program and ‘grandfathering’ is available on the FEMA website, www.FEMA.gov and at the Open Houses December 8th.

FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

###